

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1 (Currently Amended). A computer implemented process for managing an information technology (IT) project to develop an information technology (IT) product, comprising the principal steps of:

 assessing the feasibility of the project in a first principal step to determine whether to proceed with the project, and generating a first set of deliverables;

 submitting the first deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a first approval step to determine the viability of the project after the first principal step;

 performing initial project analysis in a second principal step to determine the project's functional requirements, and generating a second set of deliverables;

 submitting the second set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a second approval step to determine the viability of the project after the second principal step;

 designing the IT product in a third principal step, and generating a third set of deliverables;

 submitting the third set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a third approval step to determine the viability of the project after the third principal step;

 building the IT product in a fourth principal step, and generating a fourth set of deliverables;

 submitting the fourth set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a fourth approval step to determine the viability of the project after the fourth principal step;

 testing the IT product in a fifth principal step to determine the viability of the project, and generating a fifth set of deliverables;

 submitting the fifth set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a fifth approval step to determine the viability of the project after the fifth principal step;

 implementing the IT product in a sixth principal step, and generating a sixth set of deliverables;

 submitting the sixth set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a sixth principal step to determine the viability of the project after the sixth principal step; and

terminating the IT project in a seventh principal step, including evaluating the project, and generating a seventh set of deliverables; and

presenting information regarding the status of the project, including a vertical graphic indicating a level of completion for each principal step and further presenting a horizontal graphic indicating a level of completion with respect to the overall process involving each of the principal steps and further presenting one or more tollgate graphics for one or more principal steps that require an approval procedure.

2 (Original). The process according to claim 1,

wherein the first set of deliverable includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) a feasibility analysis; (b) a high level cost-benefit analysis; (c) a risk analysis; and (d) a cost and schedule estimate for the second principal step,

wherein the second set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) the charter document; (b) a detailed cost-benefit analysis; (c) a project schedule; (d) a risk analysis matrix; (e) project controls documentation; (f) budget-related documentation; (g) system acceptance criteria; and (h) detailed requirements documentation,

wherein the third set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) business and technical requirements; (b) system user and interface standards; (c) data model; (d) logical data model; (e) technical specification; (f) test strategy plan and scripts; (g) conversion plan; (h) retirement plan; (i) detailed training plan; (j) system transition plan; (k) updated cost benefit analysis and project schedule; and (l) IT product prototype,

wherein the fourth set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) the IT product; (b) monitoring procedures; (c) code package; (d) test results; (e) configuration management; (f) installation / back-out documentation and procedures; (g) training material; (h) systems manuals; (i) disaster recovery plan; (j) deployment documentation; (k) rollout and implementation plans; and (l) test scripts,

wherein the fifth set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) test results; (b) disaster recovery procedures; (c) support scripts and manuals; (d) warranty; (e) on-call procedures; (f) maintenance manuals; (g) help desk scripts; and (h) and disaster recovery procedures,

wherein the sixth set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) escalation procedures pertaining to a hierarchical sequence of steps that may be used by the

“recipients” of the IT product to demand that changes be made to the IT product; (b) on-call procedures; (c) solution metrics; (d) project evaluation documentation; and (e) a support defects log, and

wherein the seventh set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) explanation/documentation of variation of planned product to actual realized product; (b) best practices sharing; (c) process improvement opportunities; (d) relevant project documentation; and (e) a benefits monitoring plan.

3 (Original). The process according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the principal steps includes plural substeps.

4 (Original). The process according to claim 1, further comprising the step of accessing and utilizing at least one tool to provide assistance in performing the project.

5 (Canceled).

6 (Currently Amended). A computer implemented method for managing an information technology (IT) project to develop an information technology (IT) product, comprising the steps of:

providing information regarding a structured process for developing the IT product, the information including:

i) first data regarding principal steps of the structured process;

ii) second data regarding substeps included in each principal step, wherein each principal step includes at least one substep; and

iii) third data regarding approval procedures performed during the process for validating the viability of the project;

accessing the information; ~~and~~

performing the principal steps, substeps, and approval procedures specified in the accessed information; and

presenting information regarding the status of the project, including a vertical graphic indicating a level of completion for each principal step and further presenting a horizontal graphic indicating a level of completion with respect to the overall process involving each of the principal steps and further presenting one or more tollgate graphics for one or more principal steps that require an approval procedure.

7 (Original). The method according to claim 6, wherein the step of performing

comprises performing the following principal steps interspersed with the following approval steps:

- assessing the feasibility of the project in a first principal step to determine whether to proceed with the project, and generating a first set of deliverables;

- submitting the first deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a first approval step to determine the viability of the project after the first principal step;

- performing initial project analysis in a second principal step to determine the project's functional requirements, and generating a second set of deliverables;

- submitting the second deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a second approval step to determine the viability of the project after the second principal step;

- designing the IT product in a third principal step, and generating a third set of deliverables;

- submitting the third set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a third approval step to determine the viability of the project after the third principal step;

- building the IT product in a fourth principal step, and generating a fourth set of deliverables;

- submitting the fourth set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a fourth approval step to determine the viability of the project after the fourth principal step;

- testing the IT product in a fifth principal step to determine the viability of the project, and generating a fifth set of deliverables;

- submitting the fifth set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a fifth approval step to determine the viability of the project after the fifth principal step;

- implementing the IT product in a sixth principal step, and generating a sixth set of deliverables;

- submitting the sixth set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a sixth principal step to determine the viability of the project after the sixth principal step; and

- terminating the IT project in a seventh principal step, including evaluating the project, and generating a seventh set of deliverables.

8 (Original). The method according to claim 6, wherein the information provided regarding the structured process additionally includes fourth data regarding output-deliverables produced by the structured process flow and the timing at which the output-deliverables should

be generated.

9 (Original). The method according to claim 8, wherein the information provided regarding the structured process additionally includes fifth data regarding at least one tool that can be utilized to provide assistance in performing the project.

10 (Original). The method according to claim 9, wherein at least one tool includes at least one worksheet for use in performing at least one step in the structured process.

11 (Original). The method according to claim 6, wherein the step of providing information comprises providing a database containing first, second, and third files storing the first, second, and third data, respectively.

12 (Original). The method according to claim 11, wherein the step of accessing the information comprises utilizing a database access device to retrieve information stored in the database and presenting the information to a user.

13 (Canceled).

14 (Currently Amended). A computer implemented system for assisting a user in managing an information technology (IT) project to develop an information technology (IT) product, comprising:

a database providing information regarding a structured process for developing the project, the information including:

(i) a first file containing first data regarding principal steps used in the structured process;

ii) a second file containing second data regarding substeps included in each principal step, wherein each principal step includes at least one substep; and

iii) a third file containing third data regarding approval procedures performed during the process for validating the viability of the project; and

a database access device configured to access the database and allow the user to interact with the information, to thereby allow the user to perform the principal steps, substeps, and approval procedures specified in the information;

wherein the database access device comprises an output device configured to present information regarding the status of the project, including a vertical graphic indicating a level of completion for each principal step and further including a horizontal graphic indicating a level of completion with respect to the overall process involving each of the principal steps and further

presenting one or more tollgate graphics for one or more principal steps that require an approval procedure.

15 (Original). The system according to claim 14, wherein information provided in the first file identifies the following principal steps:

assessing the feasibility of the project in a first principal step to determine whether to proceed with the project, and generating a first set of deliverables;

performing initial project analysis in a second principal step to determine the project's functional requirements, and generating a second set of deliverables;

designing the IT product in a third principal step, and generating a third set of deliverables;

building the IT product in a fourth principal step, and generating a fourth set of deliverables;

testing the IT product in a fifth principal step to determine the viability of the project, and generating a fifth set of deliverables;

implementing the IT product in a sixth principal step, and generating a sixth set of deliverables; and

terminating the IT project in a seventh principal, including evaluating the project, and generating a seventh set of deliverables.

16 (Original). The system according to claim 15,

wherein the first set of deliverable includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) a feasibility analysis; (b) a high level cost-benefit analysis; (c) a risk analysis; and (d) a cost and schedule estimate for the second principal step,

wherein the second set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) the charter document; (b) a detailed cost-benefit analysis; (c) a project schedule; (d) a risk analysis matrix; (e) project controls documentation; (f) budget-related documentation; (g) system acceptance criteria; and (h) detailed requirements documentation,

wherein the third set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) business and technical requirements; (b) system user and interface standards; (c) data model; (d) logical data model; (e) technical specification; (f) test strategy plan and scripts; (g) conversion plan; (h) retirement plan; (i) detailed training plan; (j) system transition plan; (k) updated cost benefit analysis and project schedule; and (l) IT product prototype,

wherein the fourth set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables:
(a) the IT product; (b) monitoring procedures; (c) code package; (d) test results; (e) configuration management; (f) installation / back-out documentation and procedures; (g) training material; (h) systems manuals; (i) disaster recovery plan; (j) deployment documentation; (k) rollout and implementation plans; and (l) test scripts,

wherein the fifth set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables:
(a) test results; (b) disaster recovery procedures; (c) support scripts and manuals; (d) warranty; (e) on-call procedures; (f) maintenance manuals; (g) help desk scripts; and (h) and disaster recovery procedures,

wherein the sixth set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables:
(a) escalation procedures pertaining to a hierarchical sequence of steps that may be used by the "recipients" of the IT product to demand that changes be made to the IT product; (b) on-call procedures; (c) solution metrics; (d) project evaluation documentation; and (e) a support defects log, and

wherein the seventh set of deliverables includes one or more of the following deliverables: (a) explanation/documentation of variation of planned product to actual realized product; (b) best practices sharing; (c) process improvement opportunities; (d) relevant project documentation; and (e) a benefits monitoring plan.

17 (Original). The system according to claim 15, wherein information provided in the third file identifies the following approval steps:

submitting the first deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a first approval step to determine the viability of the project after the first principal step;

submitting the second deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a second approval step to determine the viability of the project after the second principal step;

submitting the third set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a third approval step to determine the viability of the project after the third principal step;

submitting the fourth set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a fourth approval step to determine the viability of the project after the fourth principal step;

submitting the fifth set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a fifth approval step to determine the viability of the project after the fifth principal step; and

submitting the sixth set of deliverables to one or more authorizing agents in a sixth

principal step to determine the viability of the project after the sixth principal step.

18 (Original). The system according to claim 14, wherein the information provided regarding the structured process additionally includes fourth data regarding deliverable-outputs produced by the project and the timing at which the deliverable-outputs should be generated.

19 (Original). The system according to claim 18, wherein the system additionally includes at least one tool that can be utilized to provide assistance in executing the structured process, and wherein the information provided regarding the structured process additionally includes fifth data regarding the identify of the at least one tool.

20 (Original). The system according to claim 19, wherein the at least one tool includes a worksheet for use in performing at least one step.

21 (Canceled).

22 (Original). The system according to claim 14, wherein the database access device comprises a computer.

23 (Original). The system according to claim 14, further including:

at least one other database access device which is configured to access the database; and

a network configured to communicatively connect the database access devices together.

24 (Currently Amended). A computer implemented system for assisting a user in managing an information technology (IT) project to develop an information technology (IT) product, comprising:

a database providing information regarding a structured process for developing the project, the structured process including a plurality of principal steps, each having at least one substep;

a database access device configured to access the database and allow the user to interact with the information, to thereby perform the principal steps and substeps;

wherein the database access device includes an output device configured to present information regarding the status of the structured process, ~~including an indication of the level of completion of each principal step~~ including a vertical graphic indicating a level of completion for each principal step and further including a horizontal graphic indicating a level of completion with respect to the overall process involving each of the principal steps and further presenting

one or more tollgate graphics for one or more principal steps that require an approval procedure;

wherein information regarding the structure process provided in the database identifies the following principal steps:

assessing the feasibility of the project in a first principal step to determine whether to proceed with the project, and generating a first set of deliverables;

performing initial project analysis in a second principal step to determine the project's functional requirements, and generating a second set of deliverables;

designing the IT product in a third principal step, and generating a third set of deliverables;

building the IT product in a fourth principal step, and generating a fifth set of deliverables;

testing the IT product in a fifth principal step to determine the viability of the project, and generating a fifth set of deliverables;

implementing the IT product in a sixth principal step, and generating a sixth set of deliverables; and

terminating the IT project, including evaluating the project, and generating a seventh set of deliverables.

25 (Original). The system according claim 24, wherein the indication of the level of completion comprises a thermometer-type display for each principal step.